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THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL

CONTINUING "THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER"

DECEMBER 1915

EDUCATIONAL NEWS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT

In reply to an inquiry from the editors of this *Journal*, Superintendent Boetticher of Albany, Oregon, writes the following statement:

**Junior
High
School**

We have reorganized our schools in almost every particular, remodeled buildings, changed courses, and revised methods of administration. With the opening of the school year in September we organized under the six-and-six plan. The ninth grade was taken out of the regular high school and located in a new building planned and equipped for that arrangement. The seventh- and eighth-grade courses were changed and consolidated with the ninth-grade work in such a way as to make this arrangement seem to be a unit of our school system in itself. We also related it to the regular high school in such a manner as to offer inducements to try a year or two or more there.

Of course, the whole thing is on the department plan.

Leaving out difficulties of organization with which we naturally met in such a sweeping change, everything has worked out quite well except one thing and that is the attendance. Our building was constructed on the unit plan and with careful estimates on attendance. We built one room more than our estimates covered. The very first day we were "swamped" with pupils. They came from everywhere, the country, nearby towns, and some moved with their parents from other cities so that they might have the advantages of our school.

As it is, we are not satisfied and cannot be, as we are working beyond our capacity, and already we are considering the remodeling of another building by additions and equipment for a center there for the next year.

It is too early for us to offer any statement as to the effect on the work in general or to make any comparisons with former years, except that I think I notice a more studious condition on the part of the pupils, a decreased dislike for school, since there is more freedom in our arrangement and yet more definite application to work. We offer some new courses, too, such as manual training for all boys (required), sewing or cooking for all girls (required), German, Latin (elective with consent of parent and advice of teacher), physical education, with many changes in the regular grade courses, tending to make them more practical and yet as cultural.

Grade children in Adrian, Michigan, have been testing out a school savings bank plan for sixteen years. Though such plans are not uncommon among us now, there are few cities with so long a record of operation. The time has been sufficient to prove the value of the idea and to guarantee its continuance. The children in the sixteen years have deposited a total of \$30,000 in a city bank. At present they keep a constant balance on hand of about \$6,000. More than 50 per cent of the children are regular depositors. It has become a matter of traditional pride with them to appear each Monday morning with their pennies, nickels, and dimes for the bank.

Many stories are told of the assistance rendered by these savings in times of family hardship or individual necessity. The plan has thoroughly justified itself also in the carrying over of habits of saving and thrift to adult years. It is a fairly sure thing that the pupil who is trained to deposit his savings regularly will continue the practice when grown up. It is really this eventual benefit to individuals and the community that constitutes the practical indorsement of such a system.

The following cities are reported as having organized their school systems this year on the six-and-six plan: Dundee, Illinois; Park City, Utah; Old Town, Maine; Nezperce, Idaho; Adrian, Michigan; Cheyenne, Wyoming; Hobart, Oklahoma; Lowell, Vermont; Shenandoah, Iowa; and Paducah, Kentucky.

A very interesting fact here brought out is that this movement is not confined to any particular section of the country. These

ten cities represent ten states, inclosing a territory reaching from Utah to Maine and from Oklahoma to Michigan.

Members of the National Education Association are asked this year in renewing their membership to vote on the desirability of changing the form in which the proceedings of the association shall appear. The move which is described as possible is that of breaking up the *Proceedings* into a periodical form. This change is worth discussing and has been commented on before in the *Elementary School Journal*. There can be no doubt at all that the present bulky volume which arrives long after the meeting of the association itself limits very much the influence of the proceedings. If the articles are worth preserving at all, they ought to be very much more widely used than they are at the present time by the membership of the National Education Association.

There can be little doubt that a journal form for the *Proceedings* would attract readers who could not expect to attend the meeting. Ultimately a journal would include also some current items in addition to the papers actually presented at the association. It is interesting to note in this connection that the General Education Board has undertaken a review of this situation and may find it advantageous to enter the field with some sort of general organization which will contribute to the solution of the present chaotic condition. At all events, the move of the National Education Association, while somewhat belated, is obviously in the right direction and all members of the association should be encouraged to take active steps in the direction of promoting this move made by the officers of the association.

There will, of course, be some opposition to the change from journals which feel themselves already well established in various states and which desire to avoid the competition that would come from a highly centralized publication of the type that would be issued by the National Education Association. Broad motives of general interest in educational publication ought, however, to lead to a complete withdrawal of any such opposition on the part of educational journals. If the standards set by the publication

of the National Education Association could operate to raise the level of articles that appear in educational journals, everybody would profit. There would also be a place for local news of the state and district which might justify the continuation of some of the better state journals.

The Winona State Normal School has instituted a rural-education course, with a special teacher in charge, and a model rural school four miles in the country, in care of a **Training Rural Teachers** teacher with valuable rural experience and training.

The rural course will have as its foundation the eighteen term units of the regular course, but there will be added to this the study of six terms of rural education including rural methods, rural management, rural sociology, rural practice teaching, and two choices from elementary handwork, nature-study, primary methods, cooking, and sewing. The course is designed to prepare rural teachers and to give special help to persons who wish special preparation for supervisory positions in rural work and for teacherships in high-school training departments.

The model school is in District No. 87. The old building has been in use for over forty years. The district voted to bond itself for three thousand dollars and to purchase the five acres and the new frame house just adjoining the old school site. The house has been remodeled into a school with a main room 18×32 feet in size with unilateral lighting and standard ventilation. A smaller room is for manual training and another for domestic science. The upstairs rooms, four of them, are arranged as a home for the teacher and for the normal-school students engaged in observation and practice.

The model rural school enrolled seventeen children the first week and will increase this number to twenty or more as cold weather approaches. The neighborhood service which the school is expected to render has already been instituted by the first mothers' meeting ever held in the community with an attendance of fourteen in addition to four babies. The school will become the social and cultural center of the district with the probability of a union Sunday school.

The General Education Board issued on November 1 a statement of its activities. The following extracts from this statement

are of interest to general readers and elementary-school officers:

Activities of the General Education Board The General Education Board is planning an elaborate and thoroughgoing study of the system of public education inaugurated at Gary, Indiana, in order that a complete and authoritative account of this most interesting and important development in school work may be available for study and use throughout the country.

In examining the finances of institutions which have applied to the General Education Board for gifts, the Board has discovered that the methods of conducting the finances of institutions of learning were in many cases defective and in some cases unsound. In order that the experience and studies of the Board may be placed at the disposal of all institutions, the Board has arranged with Mr. Trevor Arnett, Auditor of the University of Chicago, to prepare and publish under the direction of the Board a handbook of university finance.

The Board has engaged the services of Professor Lotus D. Coffman, of the University of Minnesota, to make a study of the training of teachers for rural schools. Most of the training of school teachers in this country up to the present time has been conducted at normal schools located in cities. Residence in such institutions generally leads to graduates becoming teachers in city schools. The result is, therefore, that for work in country schools the number of properly equipped teachers is inadequate. The state of Minnesota has developed distinctly novel and successful methods of procedure in dealing with this problem, and it is the purpose of the Board in making this study to have the results of the experience in Minnesota placed at the disposal of the educational world.

Arrangements are also in progress for a survey of Hampton Institute, in order to place at the disposal of the country a disinterested study of some of the developments so far realized in the promotion of the education of the negro in this country.

The Board has appropriated \$5,500 to the Department of Education of the state of Maine for the purpose of enabling the state superintendent of education to put into the field two agents for the extension and promotion of rural education. This is in line with the policy of the Board, inaugurated in the southern states, to co-operate with state departments of education.

To enable the superintendent of education of the state of New Hampshire to organize a bureau for the critical study of school processes and results in that state, an annual appropriation of \$5,600 has been made.

Up to the present time practically all funds available for the promotion of education in the various states were necessarily directed toward providing actual facilities. The General Education Board makes these appropriations for these specific and local purposes to make possible a critical examination

of the results achieved, in order that future expenditures in providing facilities may be applied with continually greater effectiveness.

To the School of Education of the University of Chicago, the Board has appropriated \$7,500 to defray the expenses of conducting certain experimental studies in methods of teaching reading and handwriting.

The following, clipped from a Duluth paper, is of interest:

Open-Air School at Duluth, Minnesota	An innovation in connection with Duluth schools will be established within a week when an open-air school will be ready to receive pupils. This school is not intended as a home for defectives or invalid children, the reason for its establishment being that where there are as many as forty children together in one schoolroom it is impossible to ventilate as desired, and if some parents think their children are susceptible to disease, they can at once be removed to this school.
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The establishment of open-air schools plainly indicates that the community, through the agency of the school, is coming to accept the responsibility for the physical as well as the mental welfare of the child. Society is coming to realize that the most efficient body or mind may be secured only through the proper development of both.

Industrial Education and the National Society	The National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education is to hold its annual meeting for this year in Minneapolis, January 20-22, 1916. A survey of the industrial activities of Minneapolis has been made this year together with a survey of the adaptation of school work to these industrial demands. The society made such a survey last year in Richmond, Virginia. Its activity in this direction certainly seems to be a more wholesome expression of the scientific attitude toward industrial education than was the first type of activity undertaken by the organization. This society formerly devoted practically all of its energy to drafting legislation for various states. The early enactments of legislatures were many of them defective because there was no adequate information as to the type of school organization which could meet the problem. To make a minute study of various local situations is a very much more intelligent way of approaching the
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whole problem and educators should by all means encourage the organization to go on with this type of policy.

It is unfortunate that the society has to have its meetings at a time which makes it difficult for the school officers of the country to be in attendance. Formerly the meeting used to be held in the autumn. Carrying it forward into January makes it even more difficult for those who are planning to go to the meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association to attend this meeting. It is to be hoped that ultimately some form of consolidation with the meeting of the Department of Superintendence will be effected so that all who are interested in the problems of general education and industrial education may have the advantages of the surveys which this society is now making.

Educational legislation in the South during the past year has been very considerable in amount and decidedly progressive in type. This awakening to educational needs is quite general, is apparently directed with intelligence, and promises much. The following captions of laws passed in Alabama by the recent legislature indicate the general situation.

Laws were passed:

To create a state illiteracy commission.

To authorize women to serve on schoolboards.

To authorize the state superintendent of education to extend teachers' certificates and to repeal the law providing for the issuance of temporary certificates.

To prohibit the employment of teachers under seventeen years old.

To authorize the submission at the next general election of a constitutional amendment providing for local taxation for public schools.

To make the local taxation regulations effective in the event the constitution is amended.

To give a bonus to any county which votes a one-, two-, or three-mill tax for public schools.

To provide for the administration of schools in towns of less than 2,000 by the county board and to provide a method whereby terms of members of boards of education in cities of from 2,000 to 6,000 will not expire at the same time.

To provide for a county board of education from the county at large to be elected by the people and to give the board authority to elect the county superintendent of education.

To require boards of education to admit pupils who live more than three miles from any high school to any public school and to require the teacher, if competent, to teach such pupils any high-school subject.

To amend textbook commission law so as to give towns and school districts the right to buy books direct from the publishers if they give free textbooks to pupils.

To require private, denominational, and parochial schools to make reports to the state department of education.

To require the compulsory attendance at school, after October 1, 1917, of all children from eight to fifteen years. Mentally and physically defective and poverty-stricken children are exempt.

To provide for the holding of teachers' institutes during the entire year.

To provide an annual appropriation of \$134,000 for the construction of rural schoolhouses.

The following announcement, made by the National Child Labor Committee, should be in the hands of school people early enough so that plans may be worked out for some definite recognition of Child Labor Day, as recommended in this note:

**Child
Labor Day**

The 22d, 23d, and 24th of January will be Child Labor Days, the National Child Labor Committee announces. Saturday will be observed by synagogues, Sunday by churches and Sunday schools, and Monday by secular schools and clubs, and if last year's record means anything, at least 9,000 organizations all over this country may be expected to recognize the day.

But why? Why have a Child Labor Day? Surely America is agreed that child labor is not consistent with her ideals. The National Child Labor Committee, realizing that these questions will be asked, has issued the following explanatory statement:

"Child Labor Day is a reminder. We have a strong sentiment in this country against the exploitation of children, but, perhaps for the very reason that our sentiment is strong—so strong as to make it hard to believe child labor can exist in America—we have never taken the decisive steps to end once for all the labor of children.

"If a fourteen-year age limit in factories and sixteen-year limit in mines were enforced throughout the country more than 50,000 children would immediately be eliminated from industry. That is, more than 50,000 children are at work in the United States contrary to the primary standards of child-labor legislation. If the 8-hour day and no night work in factories were the law for children under sixteen, another 100,000 children would be affected. There are

still states in the Union where children nine or ten years old may be found at work in the mills. There are still states where the child of twelve may work 11 hours a day. There are still states where the education of a child under fourteen is not compulsory. The Census of 1910 found 1,990,225 children between ten and sixteen at work in this country.

"It is because these things are so and we in America are prone to forget them, that we ask our friends to observe Child Labor Day and remind the country that child labor in the United States is a live, pressing issue.

"Each year a new lot of children go to work. Each year a new lot leave school too soon, go to work too blindly, work too long hours. Will the citizens of the United States never take concerted action against this waste of children?"

The National Child Labor Committee is urging a federal child-labor law and adds to the foregoing statement the note that literature on the federal law and Child Labor Day will be sent anyone who applies to the committee's office, 105 East Twenty-second Street, New York City.

The following statement is issued by the State Normal School of Emporia, Kansas:

Music for Rural Schools Rural-school music by parcel post is a plan recently devised by F. A. Beach, director of music at the State Normal School at Emporia. Rural schools of Kansas may now have a series of concerts lasting three days for a total cost varying from thirty-nine cents to a dollar.

The plan is to prepare a program adapted to rural schools and send it out on phonograph records accompanied by the latest make of machine. The entire outfit is contained in two boxes and is sent free for three days to schools which are willing to pay the parcel postage. Over fifty counties of Kansas have requested the use of these machines. It is expected that fully 800 to 1,000 rural schools will be reached in this manner during the coming winter.

The programs were made up from a group of over seventy-five selections. A special committee was appointed by the normal school last spring which visited a large number of rural schools in the country and tested out music. The program which follows is largely made up by the vote of the children of Kansas rural schools: a march by Pryor's band, "Robin Adair" for a male quartette, the *William Tell* overture, the "Dawn and the Storm" by the band, a capricietto for violin by Elman, a chorus with a solo by McCormack entitled "Funiculi Funicula," a series of singing games for children with directions for use, among which are "Looby Loo" and the "Jolly Miller," Mother Goose songs, the barcarolle from the *Tales of Hoffman* by the orchestra, the intermezzo from *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Mascagni, a string trio for the violin, cello, and harp, "Believe Me if All Those Endearing Young Charms" sung by Geraldine Farrar, and the "Humoresque," which stood third in popularity with the children. Accompanying the records are written lectures and directions for the rural-school teacher.

The first day of the rural-school concert series is devoted to arousing interest in the music. The pieces are played and the children allowed to make comment. On the second day the music is repeated and the teacher discusses each piece and points out the parts of special interest. The third day is given to a joint program by the children and the phonograph, and the parents are invited in. In addition the children are taught to sing many of the simpler pieces and singing games. The marches are to develop the rhythmic instinct. The "William Tell" overture is used for its imaginative content. Since nearly all rural-school children have been found to be infants musically, simple singing games and Mother Goose songs are introduced into the program.

New York City has learned to appreciate the importance of her evening schools by coming face to face with the possibility of losing them. Lack of funds has been the cause. With **The Hold of the Night School** \$270,000 needed to continue these schools until May, and with practically no funds on hand for the purpose, the Board of Education proposed to discontinue this branch of service for one year. At once a storm of protest arose, and praises of the night schools were emblazoned on the front and editorial pages of every newspaper in the city. Clubs and other organizations took up the cry. A delegation of 500 young men and women, representing more than 100,000 people who are dependent upon these schools for their only educational opportunity, visited the city hall in a body as a living protest against the proposed action. The result has been a temporary solution of the difficulty by the transfer from another fund of enough money to tide the schools over until the responsible officials can be convinced of the necessity for issuing bonds. The incident is important for the evidence which it has furnished of the popularity of the night-school movement in the American metropolis.

The following announcement is made by the United States Bureau of Education:

ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL RURAL TEACHERS' READING CIRCLE

A Rural Teachers' Reading Circle *Purpose.*—The greatness and future of the 50,000,000 men, women, and children who live in the open country and in rural villages must have more adequate opportunity for wholesome and remunerative living than heretofore. This calls for leadership which can come to rural communities only through the highest degree of education of a cultural and practical kind. Much of this must come about

by the co-operation of nation, state, and local community through all the different agencies now available. The most important and indispensable agent in the accomplishment of this task must be the rural teacher.

The vital factor in education is the teacher. Without the well-educated, broad-minded, sympathetic teacher any system of education can only be a lifeless mechanism. We must look, therefore, to the country teachers and their preparation and see to it that they shall be men and women of the best native ability, the most thorough education, and the highest degree of professional knowledge and skill.

It is to assist in finding and equipping such educators that the United States Bureau of Education, with the assistance of a committee of the Association of State Superintendents, has recently arranged the first Rural Teachers' Reading Circle, open to the teachers of every state under such rules as are set forth in this letter.

Organization.—The plans for organizing the National Rural Teachers' Reading Circle were first broached at the National Education Association meeting at St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1914. The final plans which have been worked out by the Bureau of Education in co-operation with an advisory committee of state superintendents are now ready to put into operation, and teachers throughout the country may register at any time. Thirty states have already joined the circle and, no doubt, this number will be largely increased in a short time. Only teachers residing within those states which have expressed a desire to co-operate in this work will be permitted to join.

Cost.—The reading-circle work will be without cost to the members aside from procuring the necessary books, which may be furnished from the publishers at regular retail rates, or may be secured through local libraries or in other ways. There is no restriction as to membership, although it is highly desirable that applicants have a liberal acquaintance with the best literary works, past and present.

Study Course for the years 1915-17.—The books to be read are classified under five heads as non-professional books of cultural value, educational classics, general principles and methods of education, rural education, and rural-life problems.

The work is intended as a two-year reading course, although it may be completed by the industrious teacher in shorter time. To each teacher who gives satisfactory evidence of having read intelligently not less than five books from the general-culture list and three books from each of the other four lists—seventeen books in all—within two years of the time of registering will be awarded a National Rural Teachers' Reading Circle Certificate, signed by the United States commissioner of education and the chief school official of the state in which the reader lives at the time when the course is completed.

Correspondence.—Teachers interested in the reading-circle work should write for circulars, registration blanks, etc., to the Commissioner of Education, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.